

Spaces that support redefined roles of academic health sciences librarians

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Introduction

Libraries are clearly in a state of transition, and library space is also being shaped by new librarian roles. As illustrated in this year's building project column, space is rapidly being redefined in new and exciting ways. In some cases, library space is being transformed into community spaces such as cafés, galleries, and exhibit areas; health sciences libraries are quickly catching up to public and academic libraries that have pioneered these types of facilities and services. In others, library space is being used to solidify partnerships between library staff and other academic personnel collectively working on projects, grants, or other strategic alliances. In these cases, space is leveraged to the library's advantage by inviting in partners who share similar goals and objectives. Sharing space allows experts from different backgrounds and disciplines to share their knowledge and develop collaborative projects. Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) units and innovation centers are prime examples of these expert partnerships. Locating library staff adjacent to these experts has enabled them to share their knowledge and contribute to the shared projects as well. And finally, libraries can be spaces for discovery and creation of new knowledge in a much broader sense. They can be part of the larger learning or teaching center, providing study areas, test centers, laboratories, simulation centers, group collaboration facilities, and research evidence. Academic health sciences librarians and libraries need to remain agile as well as responsive to the needs of their organizations; for only then will they remain relevant.



Supplemental Figure 2 is available with the online version of this journal.

Four academic health sciences libraries exemplify the transformations that are underway. The University of Colorado is a fine example of a library that has created community space. They opened their library to the general community by establishing an art gallery for exhibits of works by local and visiting artists. The University of Utah invited their CTSA personnel into the library space to better support their researchers. The University of Alabama at Birmingham has an exciting new innovation center that encourages conversations about difficult or thorny topics. Their Edge of Chaos provides a place where all types of university personnel can collaborate to reach creative solutions to issues. All three descriptions of the resulting space supporting new roles for librarians can serve as models for how housing nonlibrary projects in library space can meet with success. Finally, the University of Arizona has strategically placed its new Phoenix library in a health sciences education building, next to an educational teaching lab, clinical education suites, and a simulation center. Their success in fully integrating their new library into a health education building provides a model of how a primarily electronic library collection complemented with librarian expertise can support the information needs of a new campus.

Connecting community to campus through gallery space

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Vision and context

The opening of a new health sciences library (HSL) on the University of

Colorado (CU) Anschutz Medical Campus in the city of Aurora in 2007 afforded an opportunity to reimagine the role that the library could play in welcoming the general community to the large academic medical campus. To help achieve this community/campus outreach goal, the new library planning team included a gallery in the facility, envisioned as a space to host publicly accessible programs and exhibits. Managing a gallery was an entirely new enterprise for library staff.

The facility

The CU HSL serves the CU School of Medicine, School of Dental Medicine, Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, College of Nursing, consolidated Graduate School, and Colorado School of Public Health and works in partnership with the University of Colorado Hospital and Children's Hospital Colorado. The library, which opened in October 2007, was designed by Centerbrook Architects and Planners, Centerbrook, Connecticut. The facility encompasses 116,000 square feet, of which the gallery occupies 1,000 square feet. Located at the top of 3 flights of stairs from the ground floor, the gallery is adjacent to the library's large reading room, a formal quiet space on the third floor. Both the gallery and reading room are used for special events, with catering permitted.

The gallery is a long, rectangular space with a west-facing glass wall permitting dramatic views of the Rocky Mountains and downtown Denver. The remaining walls were constructed with an embedded rail measuring nine inches from the ceiling, for hanging items using Griplock System (Carpenteria, California) hardware. Six long, movable

Figure 1
Gallery, Health Sciences Library, University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus



Photograph by Debra K. Currier-Miller, University of Colorado.

benches provide seating. The library invested in the construction of customized, movable pedestals for displaying objects (Figure 1).

Implementation

To prepare for managing exhibits and events in the gallery, library administration drafted a policy document establishing an exhibits committee, charged with:

- drafting and enforcing policies for use of the gallery,
- understanding liabilities and associated university policies,
- soliciting and vetting exhibit proposals, and
- disseminating information about the gallery.

The CU HSL exhibits policy is available at <http://hslibrary.ucdenver.edu/policies/exhibits/>.

Issues and insights

Library leadership quickly realized that the library staff lacked expertise in key areas. Staff were familiar

with travelling exhibits from the National Library of Medicine (NLM) and the American Library Association (ALA) but lacked knowledge of the local artist community, the aesthetic assessment of exhibits for quality, and knowledge of display feasibility. To remedy this problem, leadership leveraged their professional networks and identified individual experts on the CU Anschutz Medical Campus and at the “sister” CU Denver Campus. CU Denver supports a College of Arts and Media (CAM), with a Division of Visual Arts (DVA) who could supply the missing expertise.

Administration asked these experts to serve on the CU HSL’s Exhibits Committee. The committee includes a staff member who is also a professional artist and has networks in the arts community, faculty from CAM, and the director of the CU School of Medicine’s Program for Arts and Humanities in Healthcare. The chair is a faculty member in the School of Dental Medicine

who has served with the Denver region’s Scientific and Cultural Facilities District, an enterprise for managing distribution of tax revenues to support cultural institutions <<http://www.scfcd.org>>.

Programming

The library’s first exhibit featured works by Colorado photographer John Fielder <<http://www.johnfielder.com>>. Soon after, the library hosted the ALA/NLM-sponsored exhibit, *Changing the Face of Medicine*. Some of the most widely attended exhibits include a program on *Prijedor*, which documented war atrocities that occurred in that Bosnian city; an annual exhibit of artwork from faculty, staff, and students from the CU Denver and Anschutz Medical Campuses; artwork by children in the City of Aurora’s Public Schools; and the travelling exhibit, *A Fine Romance*, sponsored by ALA and Nextbook on the contribution of Jewish songwriters to American musicals.

Impact and assessment

The library's goal is to provide a space for campus constituencies and community members to meet and experience diverse exhibit programs. The general community is invited to attend all exhibits, and staff work with the campus to alert local media about events. Alerts are included in all campus media and calendars. City of Aurora agencies seek out the library as a partner and the gallery as a space for collaborative programming. Over the last three years, the City of Aurora Cultural Affairs Commission has hosted three different exhibits in the gallery.

Center for Clinical & Translational Science (CCTS)

Submitted by Jean P. Shipman, MSLS, AHIP, FMLA, and Peter Stevens Jones, MSLS; Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT

Having a Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) administrative unit and consulting area collocated in a health sciences library seems like a natural fit. After all, clinical researchers and others seeking support for all aspects of the research life cycle often need the expertise of statisticians, grant writers, librarians, and so on. With the benefits of a common central and neutral locale noted, University of Utah CTSA personnel (Center for Clinical & Translational Science [CCTS]) were invited by the library director to remodel a set amount of space in the lower level of the Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library at the University of Utah.

Initial planning for the CCTS area included the library director and the CCTS staff defining the various types of spaces needed. Resulting needs included offices, a conference room, a reception and waiting area, an office equipment area, and consulting cubicles. The library director also had to determine how much space to allocate to this unit based on other pending

requests and interests; a total of 2,025 square feet was assigned. Funding in the amount of \$160,392 for the design and remodel was provided by the office of the senior vice president for the health sciences.

Because a lot of the space in the new CCTS area can also be used by non-CCTS personnel and the entire area is still designated library space, accommodations for public access and use had to be considered. These accommodations included providing egress to the library's adjacent print collection and providing as much light and openness as possible in a space located below ground. GSBS Architects was hired, and planning for the facility took more than fourteen months, as it was coupled with another library renovation project funded by the university to build six library faculty offices and a conference room on the upper level of the library. Both projects were bid upon as one construction project with Avalon Construction receiving the award. Construction started January 30, 2012, and ended four and a half months later.

The CCTS 2,025-square-foot space consists of 5 private offices for CTSA-supported staff, ranging in size from 115 square feet to 143 square feet; a 286-square-foot conference room; a 250-square-foot reception area; space for shared office equipment (24 square feet);

and 3 consulting cubicles (150 square feet) (Figure 2, online only). An open back hallway allows egress to the offices and the print collection's compact stacks. A set of double doors from the front foyer provides an official entrance to the CCTS area, opening into the reception area that joins the open back hallway (Figure 3). A computer lab in this same back hallway can be used for training sessions on research software and tools.

The CCTS chose to distinguish their space with a burnt crimson splash wall and elegant lettering. Their office spaces were outfitted with typical modular furniture. A consulting area provides three hub cubicles for individual work or consultation with others. An inviting waiting area offers comfortable chairs, a table, and a lamp that sit on top a crimson shag rug. The conference room has been equipped with a high-end projection system, a SMART Board, and a small lounge area with refrigerator, coffee maker, and snacks. The glass walls have been frosted to provide privacy, while allowing light to filter into the offices and conference room. Equipment was purchased, and a small alcove is home to a copier and shredder. Costs for the furnishings amounted to \$32,450 and were covered by the senior vice president for health sciences.

The new facility opened on June 15, 2012, and has provided a home

Figure 3

Center for Clinical & Translational Science, Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library, University of Utah



Photograph by Abby L. Adamczyk, AHIP, University of Utah.

to CCTS personnel, who had previously been located in a secluded space on the fifth floor of the School of Medicine. Being in a common public space that is centrally located on campus—the library—the new CCTS space makes it easier for people to stop in on an ad hoc basis and to be aware of its existence. Those involved with CCTS initiatives and events can now attend meetings in an inviting and warm space. Another benefit has been a series of serendipitous collaborations between the CCTS and a new Center for Medical Innovation (CMI), which is now located adjacent to the CCTS space. The CMI assists students, faculty, and staff with taking an idea from conception to commercialization and teaches classes as well as sponsors various medical device competitions.

Library signage and directories have been adjusted to reflect the CCTS addition, and agreements with physical plant operations, information technology support, and housekeeping have been achieved so that the CCTS pays for their use of such services. The library has benefited by having key research personnel located in the library with whom they can consult, librarians being included in more research projects, and more university personnel coming into the building. Library faculty can easily offer research support services through a librarian research concierge, or informationist, funded by the School of Medicine Office of Research, who resides in the CCTS space, as well as a research librarian whose services are promoted by the CCTS as a core facility.

Edge of Chaos

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The Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences (LHL) at the University of Alabama at Birmingham

(UAB) underwent a major expansion project in the mid-1990s. The top floor of the expansion was shelled-in only, to be finished at a later date. In 2011, the dean of the School of Public Health (SoPH) committed funds to finish the floor. The initial agreement with the provost is for a 5-year term, after which use of the space will be reevaluated. The space (approximately 16,000 square feet) is divided roughly equally between SoPH faculty offices and the “Edge of Chaos,” designed as a space where innovation can thrive in a collaborative and interdisciplinary setting.

The phrase comes from Steven Johnson’s book, *Where Good Ideas Come from*. Johnson describes spaces where innovation thrives as those that stand on the edge between too many rules and no rules at all. UAB’s Edge of Chaos creates an environment where multidisciplinary teams can come together to work on complex problems. The Edge of Chaos website expands the concept to capture intellectual capital nationally and beyond <<http://www.theedgeofchaos.org>>.

Design and construction were managed by SoPH. While early plans showed a labyrinth of offices and cubes, the floor plan was gradually opened up to accommodate the multiple uses envisioned

for the Edge of Chaos concept. Midway through the construction, T. Scott Plutchak, AHIP, FMLA, LHL director, was asked to serve as interim director for the Edge of Chaos. Plutchak worked with Gabriel R. Rios, LHL deputy director, and an Edge of Chaos program manager to develop policies and procedures for the use of the space during the first six months post-construction. Operations are overseen by the SoPH dean and an advisory committee known as “The Naked Catfish.”

Total project cost including furniture (for the entire floor) was approximately \$2.1 million. The Edge of Chaos director is working with a development officer to design funding models and identify potential donors to fund ongoing operations.

The space includes a large open atrium with flexible seating capacity for 150 people, a dropdown screen, and an audio system. Furniture can be configured to meet a variety of needs for receptions, presentations, and other events. Graffiti artists were commissioned to paint the atrium area, and one large wall of the atrium serves as a chalkboard. A separate café area with a kitchenette has seating for twenty and three SMART Boards along one wall (Figure 4). Screens

Figure 4

Edge of Chaos Café, Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences, University of Alabama at Birmingham



Photograph by Gabriel R. Rios, University of Alabama at Birmingham.

can be shared with remote devices through bundled software. A smaller conference room has a SMART Board and seating for 12 participants, along with several small conference rooms (up to 4 people) and offices that can be assigned ad hoc to different projects and purposes.

Although library staff were not involved in the initial design, it has become apparent that there are significant benefits in collaborative management and the development of Edge of Chaos programs and services. At the most basic level, libraries are multidisciplinary spaces dedicated to bringing people together to create new knowledge—exactly the concept underpinning the Edge of Chaos.

Library embedded in a health sciences education building

Submitted by Gary Freiburger, MLS, AHIP, Arizona Health Sciences Library, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, and Jacqueline D. Doyle, MS, AHIP, FMLA, Arizona Health Sciences Library, University of Arizona, Phoenix, AZ

The creation of a new University of Arizona health sciences campus in Phoenix afforded the opportunity for the university and the library to rethink both the curriculum and the way library services would be provided. The Arizona Health Sciences Library (AHSL) in Tucson, in addition to a legacy print collection, had converted practically all of its journal subscriptions to electronic subscriptions by 2005. The library staff decided that a small curriculum-focused print collection would suffice in Phoenix, given that a courier service could deliver print volumes between campuses in twenty-four to forty-eight hours. With the purchase of additional electronic journal back files and the inclusion of the new campus in license agreements, AHSL-Phoenix could provide a full complement of information resources to faculty, staff, and students, while serving as a model of a twenty-first-century health sciences library.

An initial small area in an existing building served as the library on the Phoenix Biomedical Campus (PBC) between 2006 and summer 2012. As part of the planning for the new Health Sciences Education Building (HSEB), an interdisciplinary and inter-university user committee of faculty, students, and librarians constituted the team that conceptualized the new library over four years, with two years of construction. Facilities staff, architects, and designers familiar with health education building trends across the country were also on the team. Visits to similar buildings in the area, as well as furnishings companies, helped further refine the vision.

At a project cost of \$135 million, the construction was funded through a one-time legislative allocation to the university. The architects were CO Architects, Los Angeles, California, in association with Ayers Saint Gross Architects and Planners, Phoenix, Arizona.

The HSEB opened on July 5, 2012. Located close to the center of downtown Phoenix, the building contains 155,000 assignable square feet on 6 floors and provides wireless Internet access throughout. The library, totaling 13,700 assignable square feet, is centrally located and split between the third and fourth floors, easily accessible from all parts of the building.

The library serves the 311 students, faculty, and staff on the campus who work in the University of Arizona Colleges of Medicine, Pharmacy, and Public Health and the Northern Arizona University College of Health and Human Services Physician Assistant and Physical Therapy programs.

Primary features of the library are 42 group study spaces, ranging from single-person to 10-person rooms. Additional study space is found in 21 individual study carrels, multiple study tables, and comfortable seating areas, for a total of 311 seats. Vast areas of indirect natural light on the north and west sides offer varied shadow drama and interest to the study areas (Figure 5).

Within the library is a 1,450-square-foot space called the stacks/reading area. It can be closed off from the main part of the library with a pull-down gate to provide secure space when the library is not staffed. It encloses the 28 workstations and book stacks that hold about 600 print volumes.

Also in the library are the educational technology lab, which includes a faculty space for instructional media production and the library training lab, both of which offer spaces for teaching and learning for faculty, staff, and students. Twelve library offices are designated for library faculty and others with whom the library faculty

Figure 5
Arizona Health Sciences Library at the Phoenix Biomedical Campus, University of Arizona



Photograph by Bill Timmerman, CO Architects.

often work from the library's parent division, Information Technology and Educational Resources (ITER), which includes media services, information technology, and education technology. Other spaces include a small work area for student workers and a general workroom and kitchen.

Critical adjacencies for library operations include, on the same floor, the Center for Clinical Skills, where the doctoring block courses occur. This enables students to quickly visit the library to use one of the twenty-eight public access computers to formulate patient care strategies with the standardized patients they are seeing.

The simulation center is close by on the fourth floor. On the building's first and second floors are 140-person lecture halls and 4 learning studios. Each learning studio offers space for engaging

and interactive learning. Many faculty and administrative offices are located on the fifth floor of the HSEB, and the gross anatomy lab and faculty offices are on the sixth floor, as are those of the Northern Arizona University programs' faculty members. Being in one building offers many opportunities for interaction and collaboration.

What worked?

The truly collaborative nature of the planning process ensured much satisfaction with the end result. The number, features, and comfort of the group study rooms have been enthusiastically received. The natural light, beautiful walnut staircase, and interesting window shapes all create an exciting yet soothing environment. The great variety of seating options is appreciated by students and visitors. The study

room walls of white boards are a challenge to maintain but are heavily used. Furnishings and work surfaces, mostly white, reflect natural light, keeping the area bright, but again are a cleaning challenge. Overall, library staff are more than satisfied and indeed are quite proud of their library!

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